

# Design Guidelines 6

## 6.0 Overview

These guidelines originate from and adhere to national design standards as defined by the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Pedestrian Facilities Users Guide, the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), and the NCDOT. Should the national standards be revised in the future and result in discrepancies with this chapter, the national standards should prevail for all design decisions. Likewise, all cost information provided is relevant only at or around the date of this report (September 2006). A qualified engineer or landscape architect should be consulted for the most up to date and accurate cost estimates.

The sections below serve as an inventory of pedestrian design elements/treatments and provide guidelines for their development. These treatments and design guidelines are important because they represent minimum standards for creating a pedestrian-friendly, safe, accessible community, and have been tailored to meet the specific facility development needs of Holly Springs' pedestrian system. The guidelines are not, however, a substitute for a more thorough evaluation by a landscape architect or engineer upon implementation of facility improvements. Some improvements may also require cooperation with the NCDOT for specific design solutions.

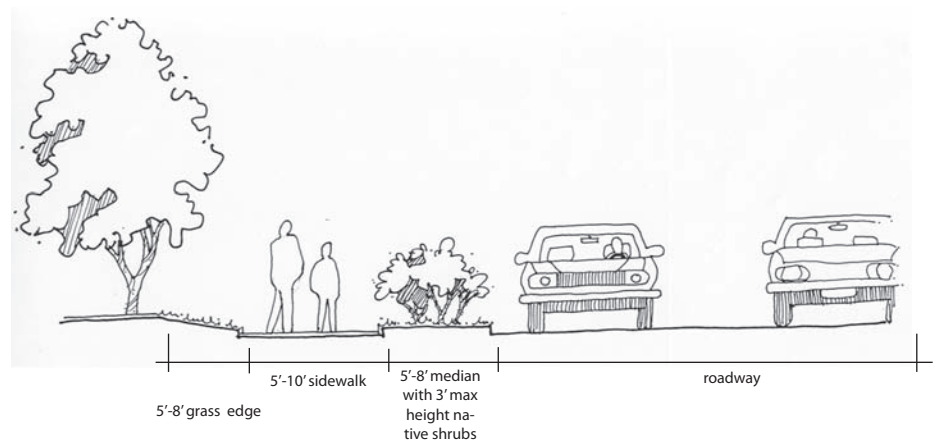
## 6.1 Pedestrian Facility Elements

### Sidewalks and Walkways

Sidewalks and walkways are extremely important public right-of-way components often times adjacent to, but separate from automobile traffic. In many ways, they act as the seam between private residences, stores, businesses, and the street. They are spaces where children play, neighbors meet and talk, shoppers meander casually, parents push strollers, and commuters walk to transit stops or directly to work. Because of the social importance of these



*Figure 6(a):  
Well designed residential sidewalk.*



*Figure 6(b):  
Typical street with adjacent sidewalk*

spaces, great attention should be paid to retrofit and renovate areas with disconnected, dangerous, or otherwise malfunctioning walkways.

There are a number of options for different settings, both urban and rural. From a European style promenade to, in the case of a more rural environment, a simple asphalt or crushed stone path next to a secondary road, walkway form and topography can vary greatly. In general, sidewalks are constructed of concrete although there are some successful examples where other materials such as asphalt, crushed stone, or other slip resistant material have been used. The width of the walkways should correspond to the conditions present in any given location (i.e. level of pedestrian traffic, building setbacks, or other important natural or cultural features). FHWA (Federal Highway Administration) and the Institute of Transportation Engineers both suggest five feet as the minimum width for a sidewalk. This is considered ample room for two people to walk abreast or for two pedestrians to pass each other. Often downtown areas, near schools, transit stops, or other areas of high pedestrian activity call for much wider sidewalks.

Sidewalks are typically built in curb and gutter sections. They need to be kept completely free of obstructions such as utility poles. A four to eight foot buffer zone parallel to the sidewalk or walkway is recommended to separate pedestrian traffic from automobile traffic and to keep the sidewalk free of light pole obstructions. Much like the sidewalk and walkway itself, the

form and topography of this buffer will vary greatly. Native street tree plantings have historically proven to work successfully within these buffer zones. They regulate micro-climate, create a desirable sense of enclosure, promote a local ecological identity and connection to place, and can act as a pleasant integration of nature into an urban environment. In the event that vegetation is not possible, a row of parked cars, bike lane, or street furniture can be used to create this buffer.

#### Guidelines<sup>3,9</sup>:

- Concrete is preferred surface, providing the longest service life and requiring the least maintenance.
- Sidewalks should be built as flat as possible to accommodate all pedestrians; they should have a running grade of five percent or less; with a two percent maximum cross-slope.
- Concrete sidewalks should be built to minimum depth of four inches; six inches at driveways.
- Sidewalks should be a minimum of five feet wide; eight to ten feet wide within Downtown; ten feet can also be considered in other areas of heavy pedestrian traffic. When sidewalk abuts storefronts, an additional two feet of space from walls is recommended.
- Buffer zone of two to four feet in local or collector streets; five to six feet in arterial or major streets and up to eight feet in busy streets and Downtown to provide space for light poles and other street furniture. See the Vegetation section later in this chapter for shade and buffer opportunities of trees and shrubs.
- Motor vehicle access points should be kept to minimum.

#### Cost<sup>1</sup> :

Concrete curbing: \$10-\$15/linear foot

Walkways: \$3/square foot

Asphalt walkways are much less expensive in terms of construction cost but more difficult to traverse and more expensive to maintain.



*Figure 6(c):  
Sidewalk with a vegetated buffer zone.  
Notice the sense of enclosure created by  
the large canopy street trees<sup>1</sup>.*

### Greenway Trail

A greenway is defined as a linear corridor of land that can be either natural, such as rivers and streams, or manmade, such as abandoned railroad beds and utility corridors. Most greenways contain trails. Greenway trails can be paved or unpaved, and can be designed to accommodate a variety of trail users, including

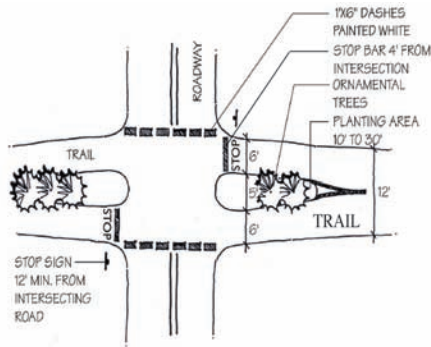


Figure 6(e):  
Typical greenway trail approach to a  
roadway

bicyclists, walkers, hikers, joggers, skaters, horseback riders, and those confined to wheelchairs.

Single-tread, multi-use trails are the most common trail type in the nation. These trails vary in width and can accommodate a wide variety of users. The minimum width for two-directional trails is 10', however 12'-14' widths are preferred where heavy traffic is expected. Centerline stripes should be considered for paths that generate substantial amounts of pedestrian traffic. Possible conflicts between user groups must be considered during the design phase, as cyclists often travel at a faster speed than other users. Radii minimums should also be considered depending on the different user groups.

While the vegetative clearing needed for these trails varies with the width of the trail. The minimum width for clearing and grubbing a 14' wide trail is 16'. Selective thinning increases sight lines and distances and enhances the safety of the trail user. This practice includes removal of underbrush and limbs to create open pockets within a forest canopy, but does not include the removal of the forest canopy itself.

Typical pavement design for a paved, off-road, multi-use trail should be based upon the specific loading and soil conditions for each project. These asphalt or concrete trails should be designed to withstand the loading requirements of occasional maintenance and emergency vehicles.

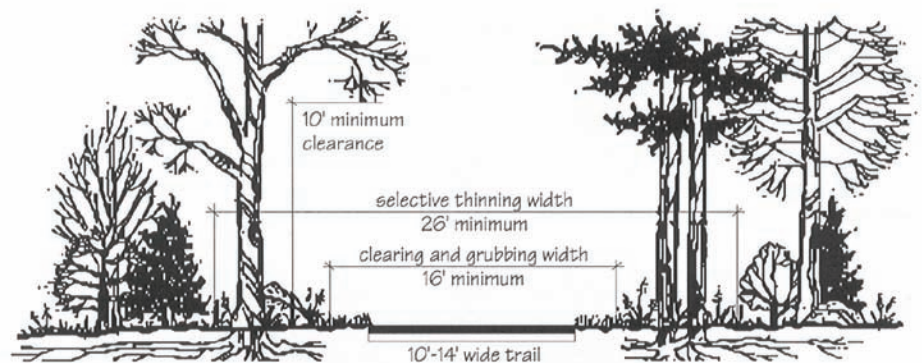


Figure 6(d):  
Vegetation clearing guidelines

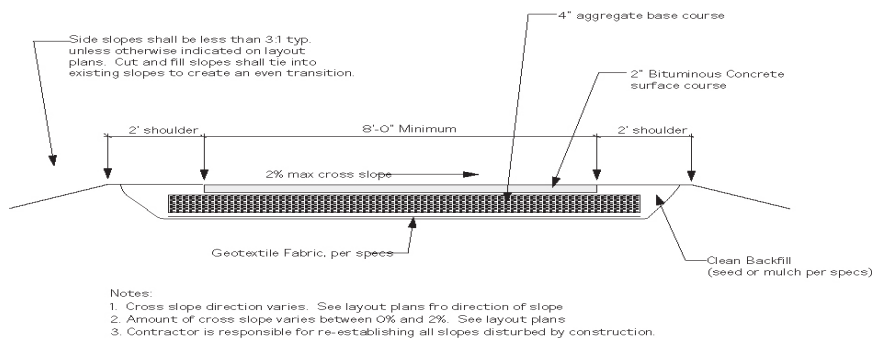


Figure 6(f):  
Asphalt pavement construction detail

**Concrete:** In areas prone to frequent flooding, it is recommended that concrete be used because of its excellent durability. Concrete surfaces are capable of withstanding the most powerful environmental forces. They hold up well against the erosive action of water, root intrusion and subgrade deficiencies such as soft soils. Most often, concrete is used for intensive urban applications. Of all surface types, it is the strongest and has the lowest maintenance requirement, if it is properly installed.

**Asphalt:** Asphalt is a flexible pavement and can be installed on virtually any slope. One important concern for asphalt trails is the deterioration of trail edges. Installation of a geotextile fabric beneath a layer of aggregate base course (ABC) can help to maintain the edge of a trail. It is important to provide a 2' wide graded shoulder to prevent trail edges from crumbling.

**Trail and Roadway Intersections:** The images below present detailed specifications for the layout of intersections between trail corridors and roadways. Signage rules for these sorts of intersections are available in the MUTCD as well.

### Marked Crosswalks

A marked crosswalk designates a pedestrian right-of-way across a street. It is often installed at controlled intersections or at key locations along the street (a.k.a. mid-block crossings) and in this Plan are prescribed for the Downtown, school areas, and key residential and commercial areas where pedestrian activity

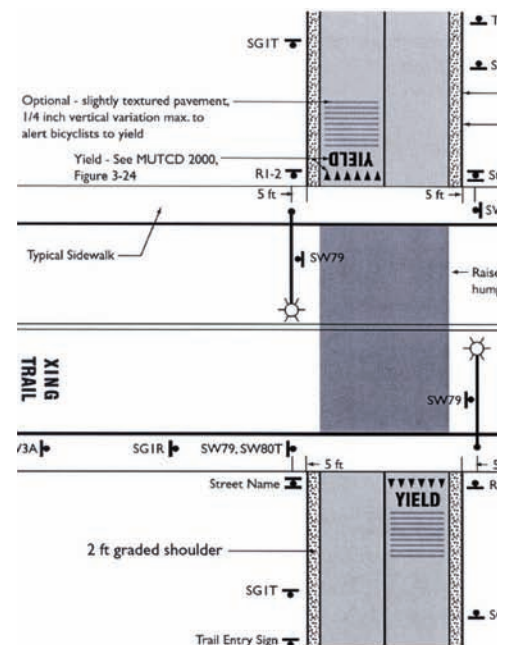


Figure 6(g):  
Typical greenway trail crossing a roadway

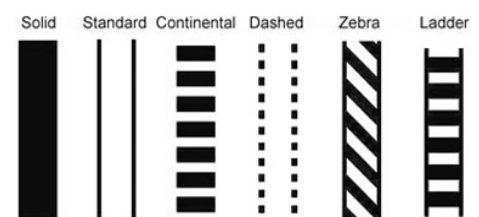


Figure 6(h):  
Illustration of all the variety of patterns possible in designating a crosswalk<sup>1</sup>.



is greatest. Although marked crosswalks provide strong visual clues to motorists that pedestrians are present, it is important to consider the use of these elements in conjunction with other traffic calming devices to fully recognize low traffic speeds and enhance pedestrian safety. In general, “marked crosswalks should not be installed in an uncontrolled environment where speeds exceed 40 mph”<sup>3</sup>. Every attempt should be made to install crossings in places where pedestrians are most likely to cross. A well-designed traffic calming location is not effective if pedestrians are using other unmodified and potentially dangerous locations to cross the street.

Marked pedestrian crosswalks may be used under the following conditions: 1) At locations with stop signs or traffic signals, 2) At non-signalized street crossing locations in designated school zones, and 3) At non-signalized locations where engineering judgment dictates that the use of specifically designated crosswalks are desirable<sup>9</sup>.



*Figure 6(i):  
Notice the wide, well marked crosswalk  
with a crossing island in the middle. The  
size and street furniture decoration make  
this a safe and visible pedestrian cross-  
ing<sup>1</sup>.*

There is a variety of form, pattern, and materials to choose from when creating a marked crosswalk. It is important however to provide crosswalks that are not slippery, are free of tripping hazards, or are otherwise difficult to maneuver by any person including those with physical mobility or vision impairments. Although attractive materials such as inlaid stone or certain types of brick may provide character and aesthetic value, the crosswalk can become slippery. Also, as it degrades from use or if it is improperly installed, it may become a hazard for the mobility or vision impaired.

A variety of color or texture may be used to designate crossings. These materials should be smooth, skid-resistant, and visible<sup>3</sup>. Reflective paint is inexpensive but is considered more slippery than other devices such as inlay tape or thermoplastic. A variety of patterns may be employed as detailed in Figure 6(h). In areas with a high volume of pedestrian traffic, particularly at mid-block crossings, a crosswalk can be raised to create both a physical impediment for automobiles and a reinforced visual clue to the motorist.

An engineering study may need to be performed to determine the appropriate width of a crosswalk at a given location, however

marked crosswalks should not be less than six feet in width. In downtown areas or other locations of high pedestrian traffic, a width of ten feet or greater should be considered.

#### Guidelines<sup>3,9</sup>:

- Should not be installed in an uncontrolled environment where speeds exceed 40 mph.
- Crosswalks alone may not be enough and should be used in conjunction with other measures to improve pedestrian crossing safety, particularly on roads with average daily traffic (ADT) above 10,000.
- Width of marked crosswalk should be at least six feet wide; ideally ten feet or wider in Downtown areas.
- Curb ramps and other sloped areas should be fully contained within the markings.
- Crosswalk markings should extend the full length of the crossings.
- Crosswalk markings should be white per MUTCD.
- Either the 'continental' or 'ladder' patterns are recommended for intersection improvements in Holly Springs for aesthetic and visibility purposes. Lines should be one to two feet wide and spaced one to five feet apart.

#### Cost<sup>1</sup>:

Regular striped:	\$100
Continental :	\$300
Ladder crosswalk:	\$300
Pattern concrete:	\$3,000
Maintenance cost varies according to region and pattern used	

### Advance Stop Bars

Moving the vehicle stop bar 15–30 feet back from the pedestrian crosswalk at signalized crossings and mid-block crossings increases vehicle and pedestrian visibility. Advance stop bars are 1–2 feet wide and they extend across all approach lanes at intersections. The time and distance created allows a buffer in which the pedestrian and motorist can interpret each other's intentions. Studies have shown that this distance translates directly into increased safety for both motorist and pedestrian. One study in particular claims that by simply adding a "Stop Here for Pedestrians" sign reduced pedestrian motorist conflict by 67%. When this was used in conjunction with advance stop lines, it increased to 90%<sup>1</sup>.